

**BALTIMORE CITY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING  
URBAN DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE REVIEW PANEL  
MEETING MINUTES**

**Date:** October 1, 2015

**Meeting # 214**

**Project:** 21<sup>st</sup> Century School Initiative – Cherry Hill EMS

**Phase:** Discussion #1

**Location:** 801 Bridgeview Rd, Baltimore MD 21225

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**PRESENTATION:**

Architect John Srygley of JRS Architects reviewed history and condition of the site followed by schematic plans, massing, and exterior articulation schemes for the proposed structure. This project involves the renovation and addition to a 1945 Baltimore City Public School building for a two-story building with total above grade 122,340 sq. ft. (26,967 sq. ft. existing and 95,473 sq. ft. new), existing basement area of 6,350 sq.ft. and 42 off-street parking spaces.

Cherry Hill EMS is located in the Cherry Hill neighborhood and is surrounded primarily by tow-story residential structures, a BCRP Community Center to the southeast and decommissioned Patapsco middle school slated for demolition. The existing school consists of a 1945 building to be renovated and a 1959 addition to be demolished. Proposed addition and outdoor spaces are to replace the extensive existing asphalt surface on the site and a new soccer field (part of a separate project) is to replace the Patapsco school structure.

The design team presented an early feasibility study and a subsequent schematic design for the proposed site that maintains a Main Entry to the school from Bridgeview road via the existing building and introduces a drop-off area with separate parking area that organizes and zones the vehicular traffic at the site. The rest of the site plan suggests an emergency/service vehicle road that encircles the school site and connects to the BCRP Community Center. The new structure is organized with the main common spaces clustered to the west and all classroom spaces organized around an internal courtyard to the east. The new classroom wing is oriented parallel to the Community Center to the south with exterior learning and recreation program located between the two aiming to create a strong connecting between the buildings. The remaining addition is oriented parallel to the exiting structure and establishes a central hallway between them, intended to serve as a “main street” to the entire building. The proposed materials include contemporary use of brick and glass to contrast the existing building and the project is required to achieve a minimum LEED Silver rating.

**Comments from the Panel:**

The Panel expressed the general need to study the potential site connections and building massing in diagrammatic form in order to resolve potential conflict in site and building configuration with the following specific areas for further study:

1. **Site Organization** – the panel encouraged the designers to investigate potential flexibility in the configuration of the proposed service road and soccer field as they relate to the ability to compose the common spaces program at the west side of the addition so that it takes advantage of the site without compromising exterior spaces and compressing the space between the school and the community center. The panel also suggested that a stronger relationship between the school building and the community center is established not by way of drastically manipulating the form orientation of the building but rather by creating meaningful connections and more intentionally

composed outdoor spaces between the two structures. Generally, the site planning effort for the project would need to establish clear and deliberate landscape strategies that address the various conditions across the site as they relate to the corresponding use of the building in those areas.

2. **Building Organization** – the panel complemented the design team on honoring the existing building by setting back the addition at the north facade of the building and discussed the need to respond to that condition on the south side as well. Suggestions included potentially aligning the existing building with the proposed courtyard by exposing the south façade and using it as the main organizing element for the new building by also providing a strong axial connection to the Community Centre to the south. Other discussions included exposing the courtyard to the ‘main street’ element of the school in order to activate it via the common spaces rather than the passive overlook from the classrooms, shifting the gym/cafeteria towards the service drive and allowing the main spine to connect through to the Rec. Center, and shifting the new classroom bar to be orthogonal to the historic building to create the interior wall of the courtyard.
3. **Building Articulation** – the panel was complementary of the general direction of the building articulation and requested clear massing diagrams that explain the intent and strategy of the architectural treatment of the proposed building.

**Panel Action:** No action, discussion only.

**Attending:**

John Srygley - JRS Architects  
David Schrader – SGA  
Bob Max – GWWO  
Todd Niefeld, Diane Miceli, Dan Hagan, Michael McBride – CSP  
Ran Licovitch – SEI  
Christine Angleton – HESS  
Sally Costello – BDC  
Ryan Patterson BOPA  
Klaus Philipsen – ArchPlan  
Brian Fincher – N+W  
Joe Corson – The Blue Book

Messrs. Bowden, Haresign, and Ms. Ilieva\* - UDARP Panel  
Director Tom Stosur, Anthony Cataldo, Christina Hartsfield – Planning Department